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Letter dated 8 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

During Pakistan's presidency, the Security Council held a thematic debate on 28 May 2004 on "Complex crises and United Nations response". The presidency undertook to prepare and circulate a summary of the important ideas and suggestions that were presented during the Council debate.

The summary prepared by the Pakistan delegation pursuant to that understanding is attached herewith. I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Munir **Akram**

04-50709 (E) 160904

Annex to the letter dated 8 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Complex crises and United Nations response

Letter dated 24 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2004/423)

The Security Council, at its meeting on 28 May 2004, held a wide-ranging thematic debate on "Complex crises and United Nations response". The primary objective of the debate, as outlined by the Presidency (Pakistan) in its non-paper (S/2004/423), was to have a strategic look at the interrelated issues constituting complex crises and to explore ways of addressing them through long-term, comprehensive, integrated and composite approaches with enhanced system-wide coordination. The President of the Economic and Social Council and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator also participated in the discussion.

During the meeting, the participants advanced a number of useful and important ideas and suggestions on policy responses and increased system-wide coordination for preventing, managing and resolving complex crises. Conflict prevention, the link between peace and development, and the need to address the root causes emerged as the most vital components of an integrated, coherent and comprehensive approach for durable peace and security. Many speakers noted the relevance of the topic in the context of the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the sixtieth session of the General Assembly in 2005. The ideas and suggestions presented during the Council's discussion are summed up below.

General

- Most of the situations of which the Security Council is currently seized fall into the category of complex crises — conflicts that not only have military and security dimensions but also political, economic, social and humanitarian facets. Other principal organs and agencies of the United Nations are facing the same situation.
- The United Nations is an institution best suited to generating responses to complex crises in a timely, effective and coherent manner.
- Most crises that the Council addresses, or would seek to prevent, are complex. They represent a failure of political, economic and sometimes social institutions and therefore require solutions to meet both security and development needs. The United Nations role in the international response to this mix of security and development needs should draw on various bodies within the United Nations system and be carefully coordinated with various other non-United Nations sources of expertise and resources.
- It is the collective responsibility of all — the Security Council, the General Assembly, individual member States, regional organizations, various United Nations departments, agencies and programmes and non-governmental

organizations — not only to perform their respective roles as effectively as possible, but to respond to these issues together as a cohesive whole.

- The intrinsic link between peace and development must remain at the core of United Nations response to complex crises.

Conflict prevention

- In tackling complex crises, prevention plays a pivotal role and should be the first priority. The United Nations should move from a culture of response to a culture of prevention.

- The major investments to be made by the international community — including political, diplomatic, financial, economic, cultural, analytical and moral — must be in prevention. The main and subsidiary bodies of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat — regional and subregional organizations, financial institutions and civil society, non-governmental organizations, schools, the press and all social actors should make conflict prevention the cornerstone of a universal and common endeavour to promote a more peaceful, equitable and prosperous world.

- Conflict prevention must be based on broad concept of security that comprises political aspects, good governance, sustainable development, respect for human rights, and combating inequality and marginalization.

- The recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on prevention of armed conflict dwell on how the United Nations system can best interact in order to prevent armed conflicts and enhance States' capacity to prevent them.

- There is a need to develop or formulate an overall conflict-prevention strategy that will ensure the integrated and comprehensive work of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretary-General and the participation of other actors including regional organizations, funds and programmes, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the business community and the Bretton Woods institutions, among other players.

- The Security Council should formulate an integrated preventive strategy suited to the characteristics of complex crises. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the various United Nations agencies, on the basis of their comparative advantages and acting within their respective competences, should develop synergy in their conflict-prevention efforts.

- Preventive action should address the deep-rooted socio-economic, cultural, environmental, institutional and other structural causes that often underlie immediate political symptoms of conflicts.

- There is a resource gap in the comprehensive, integrated response sought by the international community for conflict prevention and ensuring human security. This gap should be overcome by means of a bolder, more precise approach to detecting and preventing conflicts and by making development a dimension of complex United Nations operations, at the same integral level as the humanitarian and human rights dimensions.

Early warning and preventive diplomacy

- At the policy level, the first priority must always be preventive diplomatic action. A credible early warning capacity based on impartial and accurate analysis of situations remains an essential requirement.
- United Nations systems need to be strengthened to deal with short and long-range early warning factors. The existing capacities within the system may be better utilized to coordinate and apply the information already available. It would also be useful to tap into the capacities outside the United Nations system.
- High priority must be accorded to the functions of preventive diplomacy, which, based on the Organization's global representation and on its legitimacy, must refine its ability to analyse and anticipate crises and help defuse them in the early stages of development by the use of good offices in the context of joint action by the Security Council and the competent bodies of the regional and subregional organizations concerned.
- The role of the Secretary-General pursuant to Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations is critical. More frequent use should be made of the provisions of resolutions 1296 (2000) and 1366 (2001) that encourage the Secretary-General to convey to the Security Council his assessment of potential threats to international peace and security in accordance with Article 99 of the Charter.
- The Secretary-General's initiative to appoint a special adviser for the prevention of genocide and other especially serious crimes is promising.
- The practice of forming groups of friends and of appointing special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General should be continued as a means of enhancing cooperation and harnessing collaboration with the Secretary-General.
- The Security Council should look into how the Secretary-General might be given better tools for pursuing preventive policies and thereby achieve the objective of involving the Security Council in situations that might evolve into conflict.
- Further to its presidential statement of 13 May 2003 on its role in the pacific settlement of disputes, the Security Council should make greater use of Chapter VI procedures to promote conflict prevention.
- In the context of preventive diplomatic action or "conflict avoidance", a much more energetic and consistent role must be played by the whole collective security mechanism provided by the Charter. We might evolve in the future to the establishment of conflict-avoiding operations.
- In terms of prevention, early warning must be accompanied by early response.
- Translating early warning into early action is a complex task. Political will and resources are essential.
- Early warning helps in improved contingency planning. There is no point in contingency planning, however, if the resources to do something about it are not available.

Conflict management and resolution

- The General Assembly must make full use of the potentialities envisaged in Articles 10, 11 and 13 of the Charter. It should play a larger role in considering the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security and in drawing the attention of the Council to situations that are likely to endanger peace and security.
- The Council must pay greater attention to resolving conflicts. Chapter VI of the Charter contains a whole inventory of measures that the Council could employ in pursuit of this objective.
- The Security Council's missions to regions of crisis have become an important tool for gaining a better understanding of ground realities and for finding ways of containing conflict and promoting peace processes.
- Crisis management may draw on the following measures:
  - There must be strong local leadership with a broad social base that enjoys the firm support of the international community.
  - An integrated plan must be prepared, adapted to the situation on the ground. The temptation to make a hasty exit must be resisted.
  - Sufficient resources must be mobilized to implement the integrated plan and make consistent use of the appropriate tools with a view to ensuring that those resources are not wasted. Constant monitoring of the plan and of the evolution of the situation on the ground should be maintained with a view to responding to changing circumstances.
- In the process of crisis resolution, the will of the people of the countries concerned should be respected and their views fully sought. Only thus can the settlement plans surely contribute to the resolution of crises and the attainment of peace.
- Assistance to civilians in need is also undermined by the skewed flows of humanitarian funding for complex emergencies. Political interests, strategic priorities and the media spotlight create enormously disproportionate response to crises. The Security Council should consider carefully the links between the maintenance of international peace and security and inadequate funding in certain crises.

Peacekeeping

- More elements of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, in particular development and education capacities, should be incorporated into peacekeeping operations.
- We need to make sure that Council mandates for peacekeeping operations take sufficient account of the less tangible threats.
- Peacekeeping operations can be effective, and cost-effective, only if mechanisms of sustained peace are incorporated into the Security Council resolutions. Otherwise, countries and populations may easily fall back into conflict. We have to be more creative in our common objective of sustained

peace, requesting direct involvement of the Economic and Social Council and of United Nations development agencies.

- Planning for peacekeeping operations is crucial. Consideration may be given to whether we can: involve, at an earlier stage of the process, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his assistants, including the person in charge of humanitarian action and development; make better use of the experience of United Nations agencies in the planning stage; bring the phase of the assessment of economic and social needs involving the World Bank to the design of a peacekeeping operation. These questions should be considered by the Secretariat, which should then share its observations with the Council.

- A great deal remains to be done to improve the peacekeeping potential of the United Nations, especially in such areas as rapid response, the effective use of material resources, financing, transport, the training of staff, etc.

- The United Nations Secretariat and the international community must significantly restructure their work in peacekeeping in keeping with the new tasks. So it is ensured that the interdepartmental groups established within the framework of the United Nations Secretariat are effectively working on the preparation of complex operations for peacekeeping and the subsequent social and economic recovery and nation-building of countries suffering from conflicts.

- The concept of exit strategies must primarily be linked to realistic benchmarks, rather than observing rigid deadlines.

Role of regional and subregional organizations and States

- The potential of Chapter VIII of the Charter should be further developed to ensure a truly legitimate collective reaction to complex emergency situations under conditions of international conflict.

- The Security Council, in addressing complex crises, should seek the views of regional organizations on a wider basis, share its information with regional organizations and achieve mutual complementarity with them.

- The periodic meetings with regional organizations promoted by the United Nations and aimed at optimizing the use of resources and avoiding duplication. The international community must provide assistance to enable regional organizations to shoulder their responsibilities.

- The Secretary-General's special envoys can join the special envoys of the African Union and other regional organizations in their good offices and mediation efforts. In addition, the United Nations should increase assistance to regional organizations such as the AU, to help them enhance their overall capacity in early warning, peacekeeping and other endeavours.

- A regional approach to complex crises requires the creation of regional pillars to optimize the use of the resources made available by the pre-existing international security framework. The regional security framework that the African countries are seeking to establish, a process that culminated in the launch of the Peace and Security Council, should receive the same level of attention in terms of resource allocation as international operations. The Peace

and Security Council of the African Union should be supported and encouraged.

- Preventive diplomacy should be consistently taken up by regional organizations.

- A national response is appropriate and should be encouraged. National actors from civil society and the Government have the local knowledge and the long-term commitment necessary to resolve complex crises. Their potential contribution should not be underestimated, and their capacity for response should be strengthened.

Addressing the underlying causes of conflict

- At the root of most conflicts are issues of poverty, corruption, deliberate manipulation of minority groups and social inequality and exclusion. Dealing effectively with complex crises requires addressing their root causes.

- In the long list of root causes, poverty and underdevelopment seem to be omnipresent. The theatre of nearly all the conflict situations we are dealing with is the developing world.

- The Council must go beyond conflict management in addressing complex crises. While peacekeeping missions working within their mandates can help in different ways, they are not a panacea for the whole range of complex issues and underlying causes.

- In the context of the root causes of conflict and instability, it is necessary to address not only easily understood threats, such as from uncontrolled militia, arms proliferation and terrorism, but also harder-to-measure threats, such as human rights abuses, the spread of disease, population movements, the scarcity of resources, weak governance, lack of democracy, poverty, social injustice, environmental degradation.

- Underdevelopment and under-education are found at the root of most conflicts in the world. Economic inequalities and poverty exacerbate difference and intolerance and invariably kindle friction and, ultimately, conflict. The root causes of conflict will recur after any peacekeeping intervention if sufficient attention is not paid to sustained development, thus creating a very vicious circle.

- To eliminate the underlying root causes of crises, development must be made a top priority.

Peace and development

- There is unanimous agreement that development is the best way to prevent conflicts.

- Conflict prevention and sustainable and equitable development are mutually reinforcing activities.

- Post-cold-war crises and conflicts occur mostly in underdeveloped countries and regions. The United Nations should devote greater attention to development, strive to help developing countries eradicate poverty and develop their economies and increase its involvement in post-conflict regional

and national reconstruction. The Economic and Social Council can play an even greater role in that regard.

- Development assistance must provide a framework for enhancing and intensifying dialogue between donors and recipients to promote the creation of inclusive structures and the greatest possible national absorption capacities. That way, development assistance can become a preferred instrument for promoting peace and preventing conflict.

Post-conflict peace-building

The need for resources and international response

- In an analysis of complex crises, the line between conflict prevention and the maintenance and building of peace becomes blurred. Peace-building often starts in the peacekeeping phase as reflected in the mandates of certain complex and multidimensional missions. The peace-building phase also has an important preventive aspect, in order to prevent the fragile situation typical of States emerging from a crisis from degenerating into another conflict.

- It is important to develop a framework and an enabling environment for peace-building activities. These include the need to ensure a speedy operational response and the optimum mobilization of human, technical and financial resources as well as the need to direct efforts at preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflicts.

- The success of efforts to change the dynamics of conflict that characterize complex crises into a dynamic for peace depends on the firm long-term commitment of the international community, including through an integrated plan with clear objectives, the firm resolve of the authorities of the State emerging from crisis, the implementation of measures necessary to building peace and ensuring national reconciliation, the political and financial support of the international community for transitional institutions, and the provision of tools adapted to the challenges of peace-building in the post-conflict period.

- The Security Council has acknowledged that the dimensions of crises may be so complex that non-security-related resources and personnel are also needed to address them fully to prevent the resurgence of violence.

- Sustainable security is intimately bound up with development. The United Nations family, including the Bretton Woods institutions, have an indispensable role to play.

- Peace-building in most complex crises is not possible without the active involvement and support of the Bretton Woods institutions.

- Because of the level of financial resources that are now required, the creation of special trust funds, especially for short-term initiatives, requires some thought.

- The United Nations system needs to strengthen the coordination of conflict-prevention and peace-building activities. Donors too need to improve their coordination.

- The United Nations does not operate in a vacuum. There are also bilateral responses that should be coordinated with the United Nations. The United Nations and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General can play a useful role in coordinating and encouraging bilateral actors and donors, rather than discouraging them by suggesting that the United Nations has it all under control.

- In cases of complex crisis with prolonged violence, development programmes should not focus on short-term humanitarian assistance to the exclusion of support for long-term needs.

- The requirement of adequate and full funding of the actions required to prevent, manage and ameliorate conflicts and to restore peace and stability is relevant throughout the system: not only are the United Nations and its family of organizations the only available instrument for dealing with complex crises: they are also the most cost-effective.

- To enhance the capacity of the United Nations in the implementation of a response to complex crises, the participation of non-governmental organizations, civil society, the business sector and international financial institutions should include devising methods for generating resources from a peace-building perspective.

- The Council's debate on the role that private sector can play in addressing conflict and post-conflict situations has been yet another opportunity to demonstrate the complementarity between State and non-State actors.

Transition and follow-up

- The question of follow-up to strategies is probably one of the greatest weaknesses in the systems established by the international community. The lack of stringent follow-up is quite probably one of the causes of some of the failures that have occurred. We must consider political and administrative mechanisms that enable an effective follow-up of the progress made, warn of obstacles and propose remedies. Such mechanisms musts involve the members of the Security Council, the countries concerned, major donors, regional and subregional organizations, and international financial agencies and institutions.

- In situations of transition, progress on security and political developments need to be accompanied by corresponding progress on the humanitarian, social and economic fronts if peace is to take hold.

- It is clear that the various problems relating to transition cannot be dealt with sequentially, for example by dealing with security before humanitarian issues and humanitarian issues before development. To the contrary, responses must be devised at the outset in an integrated and coherent fashion.

- The evaluation of lessons learned and best practices should be initiated.

- As recommended by the Brahimi report (S/2000/809), more complete and better integrated strategies must be devised to truly build peace. We must also provide ourselves with the means to implement them and to follow up on their implementation.

Strategic coherence in policy response

- A clear awareness of the need to include the response to complex crises in a strategy that is both global and regional in nature is beginning to emerge in the international community, especially the United Nations system. Thus, the Security Council is required to provide strategic momentum in a multidisciplinary approach, including in its field, of action all of the institutions of the United Nations system, because of the linkage between the causes of conflict and the way in which they interact with one another — hence the need for coordinated action on the part of all those involved.

- The way in which the Council cooperates with and consults the relevant bodies of the United Nations system should be reconsidered and improved. In this context, the question arises of a more flexible reading of the Security Council's mandate.

- In most complex crises, the economic, political and social routes of a conflict cannot be disentangled or dealt with ad seriatim. The response should continue to come from the whole United Nations family, including the funds, programmes and agencies that have the requisite knowledge and experience as well as from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs.

Enhanced coordination among the principal organs and the United Nations system

- Apart from being within the purview of the Security Council, complex crises, because of their multidimensional character, also involve, in varying degrees, the areas of responsibility of other principal organs of the United Nations: the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

- There is greater need for a calibrated policy response, with the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the United Nations system at large working in synergy, within their respective roles and mandates.

- While the United Nations needs to apply a broad concept of security, the Council should not be overburdened with tasks for which it is ill-equipped. A far better way to address the multidimensional aspects of conflict is to find meaningful arrangements for the division of labour among those who, in one way or another, have comparative advantages in dealing with a given complex situation.

- Partnerships should be strengthened between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on peace and security matters. Article 65 of the Charter should be used more often.

- To ensure coherence, the initiatives by the Economic and Social Council must be linked to the work of the Security Council. Working relationship between the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions are a reality today in the financing for development process and in the debates on sustainable development. They remain less systematic in the security and political fields, and could be strengthened so that the Bretton Woods institutions' analysis and capacity of action can be fully used in synergy with United Nations efforts.

- The Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African countries emerging from conflict are useful mechanisms for promoting a comprehensive approach to peace and development. Although the Groups are mandated to work on countries emerging from conflict, the lessons learned from their work are also relevant to other crisis situations, as what is at stake is to ensure a coordinated approach between major stakeholders and proper consideration of the multiplicity of causes behind a conflict.

- The Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi are laudable efforts. But the advisory role and the ad hoc nature of these working groups are not adequate. We therefore need continuity and an institutional mechanism that will integrate security policy, economic development and institution-building in those areas.

- The Security Council should further support United Nations organs and mechanisms in their security and development efforts. It should convene a meeting to review the relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, drawing from the experience in Guinea-Bissau, and explore the possibility of greater interaction with the General Assembly.

- Increased interaction between the Security Council, other major United Nations bodies and the High Commissioners for Refugees and Human Rights has become ever more necessary to providing a consistent and integrated response to the challenges inherent in complex crises.

- Inter-organ coordination must be accompanied by closer coordination between the Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes.

- One aspect that is deserving of consideration is the better use of inter-agency working groups in the context of the Secretariat. In terms of complex crises, this would translate into the creation in the Secretariat of a culture conducive to the establishment of such inter-agency groups. Such groups could address the conflict from multiple perspectives and inform the Council on that basis.

- Several proposals have been advanced to promote coherence in response to multifarious challenges, including by the President of Mozambique and the Prime Minster of Portugal, for the creation of a new commission to promote peace and development, mandated by and in conjunction with the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

- Consideration may be given to the proposal for the establishment of ad hoc composite committees of the three principal organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — to effectively address complex crises and emergencies, including in Africa. Such proposals and similar initiatives are relevant in the context of the institutional reform of the United Nations system.